

Message Text

SECRET

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14

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-20 OMB-01 PM-07 NSC-10

SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 IGA-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

EB-11 TRSE-00 COME-00 PRS-01 L-03 DRC-01 /115 W

----- 114630

R 160650Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7315

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC HDQS

S E C R E T RANGOON 2429

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS BM US JA

SUBJECT: IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY OF CURRENT BURMESE-JAPANESE
RELATIONS

1. FOLLOWING IS FINAL SECTION OF EMBASSY AIRGRAM (A-113) ON
BURMESE-JAPANESE RELATIONS, WHICH CONCLUDES THAT WHILE JAPAN'S
CURRENT ROLE IN BURMA WELL SERVES U.S. SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES,
INCREASING BURMESE DEPENDENCE ON JAPANESE AID WILL IN LONG RUN
BE DETRIMENTAL TO U.S. INTERESTS, MODEST U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE
TO BURMA HOWEVER WOULD MITIGATE ILL EFFECTS.

2. QUOTE: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE U.S.

THE CURRENT STATE OF BURMESE-JAPANESE RELATIONS IS HIGHLY
COMPATIBLE WITH U.S. INTERESTS. IN FACT, IT MIGHT BE SAID
THAT JAPAN IS DOING MORE TO FURTHER U.S. OBJECTIVES IN BURMA
(AS STATED IN THE PARA) THAN THE U.S. ITSELF IS DOING. THUS,
AS THE MAJOR DONOR OF ECONOMIC AID TO BURMA (IN CONTRAST TO
THE AMERICAN FAILURE IN RECENT DAYS TO PROVIDE ANY NEW
DOLLAR ASSISTANCE), JAPAN IS MAKING A FAR GREATER CONTRIBUTION

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TO THE U.S. OBJECTIVES OF IMPROVED ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND IN-

CREASED INTERNAL STABILITY THAN IS THE U.S. BY PROVIDING BURMA ITS MOST IMPORTANT MEANS OF AVOIDING EXCESSIVE DEPENDENCE ON CHINESE, SOVIET, AND EASTERN EUROPEAN ASSISTANCE, JAPAN ALSO CONTRIBUTES SIGNIFICANTLY TO BURMA'S ABILITY TO MAINTAIN ITS NEUTRALIST STANCE, ANOTHER STATED OBJECTIVE OF U.S. POLICY. JAPANESE AID HAS CONTRIBUTED BOTH DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY TO THE U.S. FAVORABLE TRADE BALANCE WITH BURMA. ADDITIONALLY, WITH THE LEVERAGE OF AID, JAPANESE INFLUENCE HAS BEEN EFFECTIVE IN MOVING BURMA TOWARDS OUR OBJECTIVE OF GREATER BURMESE PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES.

WE CANNOT TAKE FOR GRANTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE JAPANESE ROLE IN BURMA WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE U.S. OBJECTIVES SO WELL. U.S. OBJECTIVES IN BURMA WOULD BE SERIOUSLY UNDERMINED IF JAPAN SHOULD COME TO DOMINATE THE BURMESE ECONOMY, WITH EXCESSIVE BURMESE DEPENDENCE ON JAPAN AS A CONSEQUENCE. IT WOULD MEAN, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT U.S. COMMERCIAL INTERESTS, INCLUDING BOTH EXPORTS AND ACCESS TO BURMESE MATERIALS, WOULD GRADUALLY LOSE OUT TO JAPANESE COMPETITION.

THE REMEDY, IT SEEMS TO US, LIES IN (A) THE RESTORATION OF A MODEST U.S. BILATERAL ASSISTANCE TO BURMA, E.G. BY THE PROVISION OF LOW INTEREST, MEDIUM-TERM LOANS TO THE GUB FOR THE PURCHASE OF U.S. CAPITAL EQUIPMENT AND (B) U.S. RESPONSIVENESS AND SUPPORT FOR BURMA'S EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A MORE BROADLY MULTILATERAL BASE OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE - E.G., THROUGH IBRD AND ADB CREDITS, AND THROUGH A DONORS' CONSORTIUM WHICH HAS BEEN UNDER CONSIDERATION IN THE GUB. SUCH POLICY ACTIONS WOULD NOT ONLY HAVE OBVIOUS BENEFITS FOR U.S. TRADE BUT WOULD ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO OTHER U.S. OBJECTIVES IN BURMA. UNQUOTE.
MARTIN

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